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REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner noted that claims 1-21 are pending, claims 22-44 have been withdrawn from the application, and that claims 1-21 are rejected. In view of the following discussion, Applicants submit that none of the claims now pending in the application are anticipated under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. §102 or obvious under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 103. Thus, Applicants believe that all of these claims are now in condition for allowance.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for responding to the Applicants' attorney, Steven M. Hertzberg, request to schedule an interview regarding this response to the Office Action. The Applicants further thank the Examiner for agreeing to interview with the Applicants' attorney during the Examiner's review of this response.

I. REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 8, 10-11, 14, 16, 18 and 21 as being anticipated by Shamoullan et al. (United States patent 6,151,203, issued November 21, 2000). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites:

"An electrical coupler, comprising:
an inner connector element having opposing ends;
an upper end connector and an lower end connector, each end connector respectively coupled to one of said opposing ends of said inner connector element;
a thermally conductive flange circumscribing said inner connector;
and
an outer connector element disposed over said inner connector and said thermally conductive flange." (emphasis added).

"Anticipation requires the presence in a single prior art reference disclosure of each and every element of the claimed invention, arranged as in the claim" (Lindenmann Maschinenfabrik GmbH v. American Hoist & Derrick Co., 730 F.2d 1452, 221 USPQ 481, 485 (Fed. Cir. 1984) (citing Connell v. Sears Roebuck & Company, 722 F.2d 1542, 220 USPQ 193 (Fed. Cir. 1983)) (emphasis added). The Shamoullan

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reference fails to disclose each and every element of the claimed invention, as arranged in the claim.

In particular, the Shamouilian reference discloses a connector member 232 including an inner or first connector element 236 and an outer or second connector element 238. The first connector element 236 includes a solid generally cylindrical central portion and is provided at its opposed or top and bottom ends with integrally formed generally hollow or annular cylindrical portions 196a and 196b in which are respectively mounted resilient banana connectors, namely, suitable female resilient banana connectors 199a and 199b; the female resilient banana connectors 199a and 199b may be suitably press-fit into the hollow cylindrical portions 196a and 196b to place the banana connectors and hollow cylindrical portions in mechanical and electrical engagement with the connector element 236 (see Shamouilian column 12, lines 11-25 and Figs. 5 and 7). Nowhere in the Shamouilian reference is there any teaching of a thermally conductive flange circumscribing the inner connector.

Referring to Fig. 2 of the Applicants' invention, a thermally conductive flange 202 circumscribes the electrically conductive inner connector elements 232 of the Applicants' invention. Moreover, the electrically non-conductive outer connector element 238 is disposed over the electrically conductive inner connector 232, as well as the thermally conductive flange 202. By contrast, and as shown in Figs. 5 and 7 of the Shamouilian reference, nowhere is there any teaching, or even suggestion of an electrically non-conductive outer connector element (238) disposed over both the electrically conductive inner connector 232 and the thermally conductive flange 202.

The Examiner has mistakenly identified the lower solid cylindrical portion 26 extending from an upper cylindrical portion 24 as being a flange circumscribing an inner connector (see Shamouilian, Fig. 1a). However, this is incorrect since the first connector member 18 includes an upper solid cylindrical portion 24 extending through a bore 25 formed in chuck body 12 and an integrally formed lower cylindrical portion extending through a bore 27 formed in a cooling plate 22 (see Shamouilian, column 1, lines 38-42). As noted above, the lower solid cylindrical portion 26 extends from the upper solid cylindrical portion 24 and clearly does not circumscribe the upper solid

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cylindrical portion 24. Therefore, the Shamouilian reference fails to teach each and every element of the claimed invention as arranged in the claim, since there is no teaching of "a thermally conductive flange circumscribing the inner connector".

As such, the Applicants submit that independent claim 1 fully satisfies the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §102 and is patentable thereunder. Furthermore, claims 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 14, 16, 18, and 21 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1 and recite additional features thereof. As such, and for at least the same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that these dependent claims are not anticipated from the teachings of the reference and fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §102 and are patentable thereunder. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected claims 4-7, 9, 17, and 19 as being obvious over Shamouilian in view of the Applicants' admitted prior art. The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Applicants note that the Shamouilian reference was filed December 14, 1998 and issued November 21, 2000, after Applicants' September 15, 2000 filing date. Thus, the Shamouilian reference is a 102(e) type reference. Further, Shamouilian is commonly assigned to Applied Materials, Inc. of Santa Clara, California and the Applicants' invention is also assigned to Applied Materials, Inc. of Santa Clara, California. The Applicants' invention and Shamouilian were, at the time Applicants' invention was made, owned by, or subject to an obligation of assignment to Applied Materials, Inc. Since this application is a continued prosecution application filed under 37 C.F.R. §1.53(d), on or after November 29, 1999, the Shamouilian reference does not preclude patentability under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. §103(c), as amended by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (see, MPEP 706.02(i)(1)). Therefore, using the Shamouilian reference in the obviousness rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 is improper.

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Additionally, the Applicants' prior art alone does not teach or suggest the invention of claims 1-21, and in particular there is no teaching or suggestion in the Applicants' prior art of "a thermally conductive flange circumscribing said inner connector." Therefore, the Applicants submit that claims 1-21 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §103 and are patentable thereunder. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that the foregoing rejections be withdrawn.

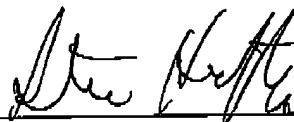
CONCLUSION

Thus, Applicants submit that none of the claims presently in the application are indefinite under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 102, or obvious under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 103. Consequently, Applicants believe that all these claims are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring adverse final action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Mr. Steven M. Hertzberg, Esq. at (732) 530-9404 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

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